

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 05726 261858Z

47

ACTION SS-25

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O R 261820Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4380

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

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USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5726

EXDIS

DEPT PASS TO FOLLOWING MILITARY ADDRESSEES: CINCEUR,
USDOCOSOUTH, USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST, USNMR SHAPE, CINCUSNAVEUR,
CINCUSAFE/IN, CINCUSAFE/INCFR, HQ USEUCOM, CINCUSAREUR,
COMSIXTHFLT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, TU, GR

SUBJECT: TURKISH-GREEK EFFORTS TO RESOLVE SISMIK PROBLEM

REF: ANKARA 5725

1. SHORTLY AFTER MY MEETING WITH MFA SEC GEN ELEKDAG
(REFTEL), I HAD A FOLLOWUP MEETING WITH GREEK AMBASSADOR
COSMADOPOULOS. LATTER GAVE ME A LESS DETAILED ACCOUNT
OF LAST WEEK'S NEGOTIATIONS BUT CONFIRMED ESSENCE OF WHAT
ELEKDAG HAD REPORTED EARLER. SPECIFICALLY, HE CONFIRMED
THAT THERE WERE NOW TWO STUMBLING BLOCKS: FIRST, THE ISSUE
OF A GREEK NAVAL VESSEL " ESCORTING" THE SISMIK; AND SECOND,
THE QUESTION OF THE TURKS' REVEALING NOW TO THE GREEKS THE
ENTIRE EXPLORATION PROGRAM THAT THE GOT HAD IN MIND FOR
THE SISMIK OVER THE WEEKS AND/OR MONTHS AHEAD.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ANKARA 05726 261858Z

2. COSMADOPOULOS CONFIRMED MY OWN IMPRESSION THAT THE "ESCORT" PROBLEM IS THE LESS SERIOUS OF THE TWO. COSMADOPOULOS HIMSELF USED THE TERM "SHADOW" AT ONE POINT IN OUR CONVERSATION, WHILE LATER ON EMPLOYING THE WORD "ESCORT". HE IMPLIED THAT IF THE "NOTICE" PROBLEM COULD BE RESOLVED, THE "ESCORT" PROBLEM COULD ALSO BE SETTLED. HE COMMENTED THAT GIVEN THE AREA THE SHIP WOULD BE IN, MODERN RADAR AND GREEK MILITARY PLANS ON ROUTINE FLIGHTS, NOT TO MENTION SUBMARINES, COULD EASILY KEEP TRACK OF THE SISMİK IN A RATHER UNOBTUSIVE WAY. HE DID NOT RPT NOT SAY THAT THIS WOULD BE WHAT THE GREEKS WOULD ACCEPT, BUT HE CLEARLY IMPLIED A PERSONAL VIEW THAT THE MATTER COULD BE RESOLVED IN THIS WAY IF THE MORE IMPORTANT "NOTICE" PROBLEM COULD BE RESOLVED.

3. AS FOR THE "NOTICE" PROBLEM, COSMADOPOULOS CONCEDED THAT HE HAD SENT THE EARLIER AGREEMENT THAT HE HAD WORKED OUT WITH ELEKDAG (REFTEL) BACK TO ATHENS AD REFERENDUM WITHOUT INSISTING ON THE NOTICE PROVISION THAT ATHENS NOW WANTED. (INSTEAD HE HAD ACCEPTED THE SEVEN-DAY NOTICE TO MARINERS DEVICE, ALTHOUGH HE RECOGNIZED THAT THIS WAS A TURK PLOY TO NOTIFY EVERYONE RATHER THAN SOLELY THE GREEKS ABOUT THE SISMİK'S PROJECTED COURSE.) HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT ATHENS WAS INSISTENT ON ITS NOTICE PROPOSAL BECAUSE IN THE GOG VIEW THE STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH THAT CAGLAYANGİL WAS PROPOSING, I.E. PERIODIC NOTICES TO MARINERS, COULD BE REGARDED AS A TURKISH PROBING EXERCISE, EACH WEEK FURTHER EXPLORING AND TESTING GREEK TOLERANCES WITH THE POSSIBILITY THAT IT COULD END UP IN A BRINKSMANSHIP GAME. ATHENS WAS INSISTING ON AVOIDING THIS POSSIBILITY, SAID COSMADOPOULOS. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE STRESSED TO ME THAT IN HIS TALKS WITH THE TURKS HE HAD EMPHASIZED THAT THE OVERALL PLAN THAT THE GOG WAS ASKING FOR COULD BE IN VERY GENERAL TERMS, AND MORE-OVER WAS BEING REQUESTED NOT AS AN IMPLICATION OF GREEK SOVEREIGNTY BUT AS A DEVICE TO AVOID FUTURE DIFFICULTIES AND CONFRONTATIONS. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD AS A "SWEETENER" ALSO BEEN AUTHORIZED BY ATHENS TO SAY THAT IF THE TURKS AGREED TO A GENERAL ACCOUNTING IN ADVANCE OF THE ENTIRE SISMİK PROGRAM, THE GREEKS WOULD AGREE TO CAGLAYANGİL'S STATEMENT REFERRING TO SISMİK EXPLORATION AS SEISMIC, NOT SIMPLY SCIENTIFIC EXPLORATION -- A BONE OF CONTENTION IN THE EARLIER ELEKDAG-CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ANKARA 05726 261858Z

COSMADOPOULOS NEGOTIATIONS.

4. I ASKED COSMADOPOULOS WHERE THINGS STOOD NOW, INDICATING THAT ELEKDAG IMPLIED THAT THE TALKS WERE AT A STANDSTILL. HE CONFIRMED THAT NO NEW NEGOTIATIONS WERE SCHEDULED AND HE SEEMED TO FEEL THAT AT THE MOMENT NEW EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM WERE UNLIKELY TO EMANATE FROM EITHER SIDE. HE ADDED THAT HE FELT THAT THE MOOD OF THE PRESENT

TURKISH GOVERNMENT HAD CHANGED CONSIDERABLY AS A RESULT OF THE BITTER ATTACKS LAUNCHED BY ECEVIT IN THE LAST FEW DAYS ON THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT FOR ITS ALLEGED MODERATION IN THIS DISPUTE -- A POINT WHICH SQUARES DIRECTLY WITH WHAT ELEKDAG HAD IMPLIED TO ME A FEW HOURS EARLIER. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE HAVE SOME TIME, HE SAID, AT LEAST SEVEN DAYS, BEFORE THIS PROBLEM WILL COME TO A HEAD. OUR CONVERSATION ENDED WITH MY CONGRATULATING HIM ON LAST WEEK'S EFFORTS AND SAYING IT WOULD BE A TRAGEDY -- HAVING COME SO FAR IN RESOLVING THIS DIFFICULT PROBLEM -- TO STOP SHORT NOW WHEN THE WORST OF THE NEGOTIATING DIFFICULTIES SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN SURMOUNTED.

5. COMMENT: AS RECOMMENDED IN ANKARA 5636 I CONTINUE TO FEEL IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR THE DEPARTMENT (AT THE ASST SECRETARY LEVEL OR HIGHER) TO WEIGH IN WITH BOTH SIDES IN ORDER TO UNDERSCORE IN WASHINGTON OUR CONTINUING CONCERN OVER THIS SITUATION. AS THE PARTIES SEEM TO BE WORKING TOWARD AN ACCOMMODATION, I WOULD THINK AT THIS POINT OUR DEMARCHE SHOULD SIMPLY CONSIST OF AN EXPRESSION OF GRATIFICATION OVER THE PROGRESS THEY HAVE MADE IN THEIR MOST RECENT DISCUSSIONS AND VIGOROUS ENCOURAGEMENT TO NOW MAKE A SERIOUS AND SUSTAINED EFFORT TO RESOLVE THE REMAINING PROBLEMS.

MACOMBER

NOTE BY OC/T: ANKARA 5726 NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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